

opportunity to join it—but it hasn't even been introduced so that the Parliamentarian would decide where it would be sent to committee for referral for consideration. It hasn't even been introduced. It has not received the review it deserves. In fact, it has not received any formal review.

As I have repeatedly said as the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I stand ready to work with any Member—and have done so—on initiatives that advance the national security interests of the United States and the defense of democracy and human rights. While there may be some urgent moments that require us to move legislation directly to the floor, regular order exists for a reason—to facilitate consensus and ensure that the legislation we consider on the floor reflects the input and expertise of Senators who sit on the relevant committees of jurisdiction.

Now, I have spent the last several days listening to my Republican colleagues talk about the fullness of legislative debate, of not preempting legislative debate, of not preempting prolonged legislative debate in the context of the filibuster. Here is a piece of legislation that hasn't even been introduced, but it is being brought directly to the floor. How does that promote legislative debate? It doesn't. It doesn't.

I happen to agree with the Senator about his focus here as it relates to those who are struggling inside of Cuba to create freedom, but I want to send a clarion message that I will not simply allow legislation that is in the purview of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to come directly to the floor without even an introduction, without review, without any debate, and then believe that one will just allow it to go through on unanimous consent. That is not how the Senate works.

I would urge the junior Senator from Florida to consider this for future legislative endeavors, especially as we are also concerned about the filibuster and extended debate. Well, this is the worst example of not having extended debate.

Lastly, I deeply disagree with the Senator's characterization—I wasn't even going to reference it—in having listened to his remarks, about the Biden administration. The Biden administration sanctioned individuals in Cuba, high-ranking individuals of the Cuban military, who have never been sanctioned before. The Biden administration led a multilateral effort for the condemnation of what happened in Cuba as a result of the citizens of Cuba seeking to simply redress their grievances against the dictatorship that exists there, and brought in countries that have never ever expressed themselves in such a way before. The Biden administration worked with the Secretary General of the OAS to take the strong position that the Senator referred to.

So I hate to say it, but this almost comes across as a naked, political, par-

tisan effort to try to promote some perspective when, in fact, we should be embracing this together through regular order, in a bipartisan process, which the Cuban people, particularly those suffering inside of Cuba, deserve. However, because of this particular moment and at this particular time and having given the Senator good notice about other future endeavors—this is not the first time—I will not object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 489) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I am glad to see this resolution pass.

I want to thank my colleagues, Senators MARCO RUBIO and MIKE BRAUN, for cosponsoring this resolution and Congressman DIAZ-BALART, Congresswoman SALAZAR, and Congressman GIMENEZ for supporting this resolution in the House.

In my roles as a U.S. Senator and the Governor of Florida, I have had the honor of meeting and speaking with countless Cubans who have risked their lives to flee Castro's brutal regime. Many of them came here with nothing, scarred by the oppression of the regime but hopeful for a new life. With what little they had, they started businesses and families and built thriving communities and are a major part of the economy of Florida.

We have all seen their resolve to fight for freedom, support their families, and contribute to their communities. They are an example of the American dream and a testimony to the ills of communism and socialism. The Cuban people are a source of inspiration for all of us. They show us what can be accomplished when you have freedom and opportunity.

That is why we continue to fight for the end of communism in Cuba and for the freedom and liberties of every Cuban family. It is why we should all join them and say "Abajo la Dictadura!" "Patria, vida y Libertad!"

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

FILIBUSTER

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, our democracy is protected by its institutional checks on unlimited power. The three branches of government are not the only manifestation of the careful balancing achieved by the Framers of the Constitution. Within the legislative branch, the Senate's unique traditions protect the rights of the minority party by allowing extended debate and by requiring a supermajority vote to pass legislation, with few exceptions. These rules have helped to make the U.S. Senate the greatest deliberative body in the world.

Before commenting further on the importance of the extended debate and the 60-vote requirement for passing legislation, I want to point out a critical protection built into the Senate's procedures. Changing the rules requires 67 votes, not 60 votes, not 51 votes—67 votes.

But in a power grab that would be incredibly destructive to the functioning of the Senate, the Democratic leader is proposing to circumvent the rules in order to eviscerate the filibuster because he does not have anywhere near the 67 votes required to rewrite the Senate rules. Instead, he will propose to "change the rules by breaking the rules," as former Democratic Senator Carl Levin, a true giant of the Senate, put it when arguing against a similar ploy in 2013.

As one of Senator Levin's predecessors, Arthur Vandenberg, warned in 1949, if the majority can change the rules of the Senate at will, "there are no rules except the transient, unregulated wishes of a majority of whatever quorum is temporarily in control of the Senate."

Both Senators Levin and Vandenberg actually favored the rule change being considered at the time, but each recognized that "breaking the rules to change the rules" would irreparably harm the Senate and, thus, our country.

Democrats well understand the consequences of what they are proposing. Just 5 short years ago, Senator Chris Coons and I wrote a letter urging Senate leaders to preserve the 60-vote threshold for legislation. That letter was signed by 61 Senators: 28 Republicans, 32 Democrats, and 1 Independent. This total not only represented a majority of Senators but also a majority of the Republican caucus, a majority of the Democratic Caucus, and the current Vice President.

How well I remember seeking signatures on the Senate floor for that letter. Holding a green folder with the letter inside, I approached Senators on both sides of the aisle to achieve my goal of a total of 60 Senators signing, representing a majority of each caucus.

Not a single Senator whom I approached said no to signing the letter, not one. Quite the contrary, each was eager to sign the letter, and many thanked me for leading the effort to make clear that whatever our disagreements on a supermajority vote for nominees, they were firmly committed to keeping the filibuster for legislation. They understood its vital importance to the Senate and to our country. This is what our letter stated, in part:

[W]e are united in our determination to preserve the ability of Members to engage in extended debate when bills are on the Senate floor.

We are mindful of the unique role the Senate plays in the legislative process, and we are steadfastly committed to ensuring that this great American institution continues to serve as the world's greatest deliberative body. Therefore, we are asking you to join us

in opposing any effort to curtail the existing rights and prerogatives of Senators to engage in full, robust, and extended debate as we consider legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this bipartisan letter, dated April 7, 2017, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, April 7, 2017.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER SCHUMER: We are writing to urge you to support our efforts to preserve existing rules, practices, and traditions as they pertain to the right of Members to engage in extended debate on legislation before the United States Senate. Senators have expressed a variety of opinions about the appropriateness of limiting debate when we are considering judicial and executive branch nominations. Regardless of our past disagreements on that issue, we are united in our determination to preserve the ability of Members to engage in extended debate when bills are on the Senate floor.

We are mindful of the unique role the Senate plays in the legislative process, and we are steadfastly committed to ensuring that this great American institution continues to serve as the world's greatest deliberative body. Therefore, we are asking you to join us in opposing any effort to curtail the existing rights and prerogatives of Senators to engage in full, robust, and extended debate as we consider legislation before this body in the future.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Collins; Orrin Hatch; Claire McCaskill; Lisa Murkowski; Christopher A. Coons; Joe Manchin; John McCain; Patrick Leahy; Roger Wicker; Luther Strange; Angus King; Michael Bennet; Amy Klobuchar; Robert P. Casey, Jr.; Martin Heinrich.

John Boozman; Lindsey Graham; Richard Burr; Mark Warner; Jerry Moran; Roy Blunt; Marco Rubio; Jeanne Shaheen; Thom Tillis; Sherrod Brown; Shelley Moore Capito; Kirsten E. Gillibrand; Brian Schatz; Michael Enzi; Dean Heller.

Cory Booker; Mazie Hirono; Dianne Feinstein; John Thune; Bill Cassidy; Heidi Heitkamp; Jeff Flake; Chuck Grassley; Maria Cantwell; Rob Portman; Lamar Alexander; John Kennedy; Jon Tester; Tom Carper; Pat Roberts.

Maggie Hassan; Tammy Duckworth; Jack Reed; Thad Cochran; Joe Donnelly; Ben Sasse; Todd Young; Kamala Harris; Bill Nelson; Johnny Isakson; Ed Markey; Mike Lee; Debbie Stabenow; Sheldon Whitehouse; Robert Menendez; Tim Kaine.

Ms. COLLINS. The culture of the Senate is built upon a foundation of respect and cooperation that is meant to transcend partisanship. It is a culture in which legislative goals are reached with patience, persuasion, and perseverance, not raw power.

I implore my colleagues to consider the ramifications for our country. Do we want laws enacted one year to be repealed 2 years later on a simple majority vote and then perhaps reenacted in another 2 years by just 51 votes?

Do we want major laws, significant changes in policy, to be rammed through the Senate without thoughtful debate and bipartisan support?

At a time when our country is deeply and closely divided, do we really want to worsen the polarization by improving significant changes in public policy by a narrow partisan vote?

We are now on the brink of heading down that dangerous road, a slippery slope toward a tyranny of the majority. Limiting the ability of Senators to engage in a debate on legislative matters would give the majority party unprecedented power to push through major changes without careful deliberation or bipartisan cooperation. Such a move would have lasting implications, as future majorities—whether Republican or Democratic—would have little incentive to work with the other party.

It is crucial that we work together and find common ground on the issues that matter most to the American people. Changing longstanding Senate rules to benefit one political party would discourage efforts to forge consensus and only serve to reinforce bitter partisan divisions.

I urge my colleagues to stand against this calamitous change and for the principles of compromise and cooperation that have long defined and been the hallmarks of the U.S. Senate.

Let us listen to the admonition of the Democratic leader when he spoke against changing the rules in 2017: "Let us go no further down this road."

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT JOHN "BIG JOHN" QUINTRELL

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today, I have the distinct honor of recognizing John "Big John" Quintrell of Helena, MT, for bravely serving our Nation during the Vietnam war and for his dedication to supporting the heroes who fought alongside him.

John served honorably in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969 with the Wolfhounds. I understand there are some Wolfhounds watching tonight. The Wolfhounds are the 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. And he received honors, including the Bronze Star with Valor and the Purple Heart.

Upon returning home, John was met with hostility and was shamed for his sacrifice in Vietnam by his fellow Americans. For the next 35 years, John, like so many of our veterans, kept that pain to himself.

In 2004, John opened a box—a box filled with items that brought back

memories of Vietnam—and he was inspired to host a reunion for his fellow Vietnam veterans.

For the very first time in over 35 years, these men were reunited. John's reunion gave these often-forgotten heroes a sense of peace, a sense of acceptance, friendship, and healing. And following that successful reunion, John and the other Wolfhounds were on a mission to find others who served beside them.

And since 2004, John has connected with over 125 Wolfhounds, and many have attended 1 of the 9 reunions John planned. After hearing John's story, his children and grandchildren worked to keep these reunions going and the legacy alive.

John's support for his fellow Wolfhounds extends far beyond the reunions he planned. In 2018, John decided to document the stories of the Wolfhounds and their time in Vietnam. To date, John has conducted over 90—90—video interviews, and because of John's work, future generations will have the opportunity to hear their relatives' firsthand account of service in Vietnam.

John decided to share his own story by publishing a book entitled "My 365 Days With the Wolfhounds in Vietnam," and he did that in 2021.

John's honest account of his experience in the Vietnam war has given countless veterans and their family members a sense of understanding, as well as healing. After years of suppressing memories of his time in Vietnam, John now shares his story. He shares his story with others and encourages them to share their own experience and find their own path to healing.

A big thanks to John's passion, and because of his dedication in supporting his fellow veterans, many soldiers are once again proud of their sacrifice to our great Nation. You see, John epitomizes the heart of a Montana veteran, whose selfless service has reached far beyond the battlefield. So I want to thank John. I want to thank John for his service to our great country and for the kindness he has shown to the heroes who served alongside him.

John, keep up the great work because you make Montana proud, and you make America proud.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

VOTING RIGHTS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, this week, the Democrats are forcing yet another show vote on the so-called voting rights legislation. They claim the right to vote is under attack by the States, and there is nothing that could be further from the truth.

Ahead of the 2020 elections, everyone from Vice President KAMALA HARRIS to Eric Holder to Stacey Abrams claimed that they were experiencing a wave of voter suppression. Now, that is very significant—a wave of voter suppression, as if they have to do something to change our system.